30

POL 14 VIETS

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

(702)

5.1

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Action
EA
Info
SS
CIA
SP
SC
SAH
I
H
SAL
IO
P
USIA
NSC
INR
CIA
NSA
DOD
AID
RSR
RSC

NNNNVZ CZ C01JB416J IA440
RR RUENC
DE RUMJIR 318 1860830
ZNY CCCCC
R 050750Z JUL 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC
STATE GRNC
BT

002560

1967 JUL 5 AM 6 19

Saigon W/P

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SAIGON 318

SUBJ: BIO, PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: VU HONG KHANH - DUONG TRUNG DONG

REF: SAIGON 76;
SAIGON 154

1. KHANH IS AN ELDERLY NORTHERN POLITICIAN WHO LEADS THE NORTHERN FACTION OF THE VIETNAM NATIONALIST PARTY (VNQDD). DON IS A 45-YEAR OLD SOUTHERN HOA HAO MERCHANT AND FORMER ASSEMBLY DEPUTY.

2. KHANH WAS BORN IN 1907 IN VINH YEN PROVINCE, NORTH VIET-NAM. HE ENTERED HANOI NORMAL SCHOOL IN 1921 AND RECEIVED A DIPLOMA IN 1925. IN 1926-28 HE WAS A TEACHER IN VINH YEN AND KIEN AN PROVINCES. HE CLAIMS TO HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE NINE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE VNQDD IN 1927; THE LEADER, NGUYEN THAI HOC, WAS HIS HALF-BROTHER.

3. KHANH BECAME A PARTY LEADER IN KIEN AN PROVINCE, AND WHEN THE FRENCH DISSOLVED THE VNQDD IN 1930, KHANH FLED TO YUNNAN PROVINCE, CHINA. WHEN FRENCH AUTHORITIES ASKED HIS EXTRADITION HE FLED BRIEFLY TO BURMA; BACK IN YUNNAN A FEW MONTHS LATER HE BECAME INVOLVED IN THE MURDER OF TWO ANNAMESE EMIGRES. THE FRENCH AGAIN ASKED FOR HIS EXTRADITION; THE CHINESE REFUSED BUT SENTENCED HIM TO PRISON, FROM WHICH HE WAS RELEASED IN 1932. HE THEN STUDIED POLITICAL SCIENCE AT THE NORTH SEA UNIVERSITY AT TIENTAIN UNTIL 1936. FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS HE ENGAGED IN POLITICAL AND MILITARY ACTIVITIES ALONG THE UNNAN-TONKIN BORDER AND PROMOTED OFFICIAL CHINESE INTEREST IN THE VNQDD; HE ALSO ATTENDED MILITARY SCHOOL IN NANKING, WAS COMMISSIONED AN OFFICER IN THE CHINESE ARMY AND BY 1941 WAS A BRIGADIER GENERAL AND HAD SERVED AS DIRECTOR OF THE UNNAN MILITARY ACADEMY, INTO WHICH HE INTRODUCED MORE THAN 100 VIETNAMESE STUDENTS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Dean Sjoberg DATE 10/5/81
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON (3)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

4. A SPLIT IN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE VNQDD PLACED HIM IN CHARGE OF THE KUNMING SECTION OF THE DAI VIET QUOC DAN DANG, AND IN 1941 HE BROUGHT INTO HIS PARTY A GROUP KNOWN AS THE INDOCHINA REVOLUTIONARY PARTY. AN ATTEMPTED MERGER WITH ABOUT THIRTY COMMUNIST-LEANING VIETNAMESE PROVED UNSUCCESSFUL, BUT IN OCTOBER 1942 HE COLLABORATED WITH HO CHI MINH AND OTHERS IN CREATING THE VIET NAM DOC LAP DONG MINH HOI (LEAGUE FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF VIET NAM) OR VIET MINH, IN A MEETING IN LIUCHOW, CHINA.

5. IN LATER 1942 AND 1943 KHANH HEADED TROOPS OPERATING AGAINST THE JAPANESE IN THE YUNNAN-TONKIN BORDER AREA. IN OCTOBER OR NOVEMBER 1943 HE MET WITH HO CHI MINH AND NATIONALIST LEADER NGUYEN HAI THAN IN KWANGSI PROVINCE. DURING THE REST OF THE WAR HE CONTINUED HIS GUERRILA ACTIVITIES, AND IN MARCH 1945 HE PARTICIPATED IN THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF TRUONG BOI CONG, FORMED AT LIUCHOW. IN SEPTEMBER OF THAT YEAR HE RETURNED TO HANOI AT THE HEAD OF 100 VIETNAMESE COMPANIONS, AND IN THE COMPANY OF CHINESE NATIONALIST OCCUPYING TROOPS.

6. IN DECEMBER 1945 HE WAS FOREIGN MINISTER OF HO CHI MINH'S GOVERNMENT. ON MARCH 1, 1946, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN HANOI MADE HIM VICE PRESIDENT OF A NINE-MAN SUPREME COUNCIL OF NATIONAL DEFENSE HEADED BY VO NGUYEN GIAP. ON MARCH 6 HE JOINTED HO CHI MINH IN SIGNING THE PRELIMINARY FRANCO-VIETNAMESE CONVENTION WITH JEAN SAINTENY, AN ACT WHICH EARNED HIM THE ETERNAL ENMITY OF OTHER VNQDD LEADERS SUCH AS NGUYEN HOA HIEP, THEN HEADING A VNQDD MAQUIS IN THE SOUTH AND NOW A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. LATER IN 1946 KHANH SIGNED TRUCE WITH THE COMMUNISTS, BUT THE VNQDD AND THE VIET MINH SOON BEGAN TAKING TERRORIST REPRISALS AGAINST EACH OTHER, AND IN JULY KHANH HAD TO LEAVE HANOI FOR HIS HOME AREA OF VINH YEN AND YEN BAY, AND IN NOVEMBER HE FLED TO CHINA UNDER VIET MINH PRESSURE.

7. IN CHINA HE REESTABLISHED HIS CONTACTS WITH KUOMINTANG WARLORDS AND CARRIED ON HARRYING ACTIONS IN THE BORDER AREA. HE REPORTEDLY CONSIDERED RALLYING TO EMPEROR BAO DAI BUT DECIDED AGAINST IT AFTER TALKING WITH THE EMPEROR IN HONG KONG. IN LATER 1949 OR EARLY 1950 CHINESE COMMUNIST MILITARY PRESSURE FORCED HIM BACK DOWN INTO INDOCHINA, WHERE HE WAS ARRESTED IN JANUARY 1950 AND THEN RELEASED IN MARCH. HE THEN TRIED TO RESUSCITATE THE VNQDD, QUARRELING WITH THE FRENCH AND WITH THE RIVAL DAI VIET PARTY WHICH HE REGARDED AS A BUNCH OF UNCLE TOMS. IN APRIL 1950 HE WENT TO FRANCE TO TALK TO BAO DAI ABOUT THE FORMATION OF A VIETNAMESE NATIONAL ARMY, RETURNING TO INDOCHINA IN OCTOBER; IN

DECLASSIFIED

MID-1951 HE BECAME VNQDD REPRESENTATIVE IN THE NATIONAL RESISTANCE FRONT, AND FROM JUNE 1952 TO JANUARY 1954 HE WAS SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SPORTS AND YOUTH IN THE NGUYEN VAN TAM GOVERNMENT.

8. IN 1954 HE OPPOSED THE SELECTION OF NGO DINH DIEM AS PREMIER, AND IN THE LATER 1950S HE MAY HAVE BEEN ACTIVE AMONG THE PARTY'S GUERRILA BANDS IN CENTRAL VIET-NAM. IN 1960 HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE GROUP FORMED IN APRIL; AFTER THE ABORTIVE COUP OF NOVEMBER HE WAS ARRESTED, AND IN JULY 1963 HE WAS SENTENCED TO SIX YEARS IMPRISONMENT. RELEASED AFTER THE FALL OF DIEM, HE HAS LED THE NORTHERN FACTION OF THE VNQDD AND HAS SOUGHT UNSUCCESSFULLY TO REUNIFY ALL FACTIONS OF THE PARTY UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP; ONE OF HIS FOLLOWERS, LAWYER TRAN TAN VIET, WAS ELECTED TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IN 1966.

9. KHANH'S RUNNING MATE DUONG TRUNG DONG WAS BORN IN OCTOBER 1922 IN CHAU PHY DISTRICT, THEN IN AN GIANG PROVINCE BUT NOW IN CHAU DOC. HE ATTENDED SECONDARY SCHOOL. FROM 1945 TO 1950 HE SERVED WITH THE HOA HAO TROOPS LED BY GEN. LAM THANH NGUYEN. FROM 1950 TO 1952 HE WAS GEN. NGUYEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVE AND A CHIEF OF THE MILITARY HOSPITAL OF THE WESTERN AREA IN SOUTH VIET-NAM. HE BELONGED TO THE (HOA HAO) SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

10. IN 1954 DONG WAS WITH GEN. NGUYEN WHEN HE SIGNED AN AGREEMENT PERMITTING HIS HOA HAO FORCES TO RALLY TO THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT. IN 1959 DONG WAS ELECTED TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FROM BINH MINH AND LAP VO DISTRICTS, VINH LONG PROVINCE, AS A CANDIDATE OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY. IN 1960 HE WAS SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC FACTION OF HOA HAO BUDDHISM. LITTLE HAS BEEN REPORTED OF HIS ACTIVITIES SINCE THEN.

BUNKER
BT

DECLASSIFIED